

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 are pending in the application. Claim 4 has been cancelled. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujiwara et al. (U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0102875) in view of Kasai (U.S. Patent No. 6,545,614). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to overcome a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claim 1 as currently amended recites "plurality of electrodes ... wherein a respective capacitance associated with each of the plurality of electrodes can be generated; ... capacitance detecting means provided for each electrode so as to detect from the respective electrodes a variation in capacitance formed between the respective electrodes and a portion of the human body" and a control unit which "detects operating information ... wherein the control unit monitors the operating information for all the plurality of electrodes." This structure allows capacitance coupling with the human body to be performed individually for all the electrodes. Furthermore, by monitoring all the electrodes using the control unit, it is possible to detect the operating information even when two or more fingers (i.e. human body) are simultaneously adjacent to or are in contact with two or more operating portions 2. Therefore it is possible, for example, in a case in which the input device 1 is provided in a controller of a game console, when the operating portion 2a and the operating portion 2c are simultaneously operated, the operational information

thereon can allow a game character displayed on the screen of the monitor to behave in a specific way through game software (see Specification, pg. 15, lines 5-11).

Neither Fujiwara nor Kasai, either singly or combined, teach or suggest a control unit which "monitors the operating information for all the plurality of electrodes."

Regarding Fujiwara, the Examiner has noted in the July 2, 2008 Office Action, "Fujiwara et al. does not explicitly teach ... a control unit." Therefore, the input device of Claim 1 is clearly not taught or suggested by Fujiwara et al.

Regarding Kasai, it also fails to cure the deficiencies of Fujiwara or teach all the limitations of Claim 1. Kasai discloses a control unit only as prior art which determines "whether a person is present" (Kasai, col. 1, lines 20-27). Kasai further teaches as its invention a discriminator unit 7, only to disclose that the discriminator unit determines from the amplitude of the detected signal whether the touch sensor is touched by a finger (col. 3, lines 24-26). Accordingly, Kasai fails to teach that control unit 104 or the discriminator unit 7 "monitors the operating information for all the plurality of electrodes". Instead, Kasai merely teaches that "electrode unit 5, as well as the circuitry for oscillator unit 1, detector unit 6 and discriminator unit 7 are all housed in a single case" or that "electrode unit 5 and a circuit unit 11 are separate entities" where circuit unit 11 includes "oscillator unit 1, detector unit 6 and discriminator unit 7" (col. 4, lines 35-43). Nowhere does Kasai teach that a control unit monitors the operating information for all the electrodes such that it is able to detect when two or more fingers are simultaneously adjacent to or are in contact with the operating portion.

Therefore, neither Fujiwara nor Kasai, either singly or combined, teach or suggest the configuration and function of the input device as recited in the currently amended Claim 1. Thus, Applicant believes that independent Claim 1 is allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2-3, 5-10 are also patentable as dependent claims of independent Claim 1.

Therefore, none of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests the claimed features of the invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-3 and 5-10 are allowable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney to expedite allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

/Gustavo Siller, Jr./
Gustavo Siller, Jr.
Registration No. 32,305
Attorney for Applicant

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610
(312) 321-4200